

Serbian Proposal To Settle Situation in Kosovo

Q. Sir, what do you think of Milosevic's offer to withdraw some troops if NATO stops bombing?

The President. I agree with Chancellor Schroeder.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:57 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany. The exchange portion of this item could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on Signing Legislation Extending Bankruptcy Code Provisions

March 30, 1999

Today I have signed into law H.R. 808, which extends the provisions of chapter 12 of the Bankruptcy Code until October 1, 1999.

Chapter 12 of the Bankruptcy Code was enacted in 1986 to provide bankruptcy relief to our Nation's family farmers, who at the time were suffering through a severe agricultural crisis. The provisions of chapter 12 enabled family farmers to meet this financial crisis by allowing them to reorganize their debts and avoid the loss of their farms and way of life.

Despite the general widespread economic prosperity of recent years, many of our Nation's family farmers and ranchers are having difficulties and face losing their property and their livelihoods. Chapter 12 is an effective tool to mitigate the effects of the current agricultural crisis on family farmers and ranchers and on communities that depend upon them. By making it easier for family farmers to work out their debts, chapter 12 also benefits creditors, who would be unlikely to obtain repayment if these farmers and ranchers went out of business.

Although I have signed this temporary extension, I urge the Congress to protect those family farmers and ranchers in financial distress by making the provisions of chapter 12 permanent. I also urge the Congress to expedite passage of my request for emergency

funding of \$150 million to provide more than \$1 billion in loans for farmers and ranchers.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 30, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 808, approved March 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106-5.

Statement on a Serbian Proposal To Settle the Situation in Kosovo

March 30, 1999

I share the view of Chancellor Schroeder that President Milosevic's proposal is unacceptable. President Milosevic began this brutal campaign. It is his responsibility to bring it to an immediate end and embrace a just peace. There is a strong consensus in NATO that we must press forward with our military action.

Statement on the Death of Joe Williams

March 30, 1999

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of jazz and blues great Joe Williams. He was a national treasure. For the better part of this century, America was blessed with Joe Williams' smooth baritone voice and peerless interpretations of our favorite ballads. Hearing Joe Williams sing at the White House in 1993 remains one of my favorite memories. Hillary and I are grateful for the opportunity to have welcomed him back for the Kennedy Center Honors every year since. We send our prayers and deepest sympathies to his family and friends.

Message on the Observance of Passover, 1999

March 30, 1999

Warm greetings to all those observing Passover.

This sacred holiday commemorates God's liberation of the Israelites from slavery and the beginning of the Jewish people's exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land. Their

journey through the desert was long and difficult, but they were guided by the light of their faith and sustained by their dream of liberty. When at last they arrived in the Promised Land, they rejoiced in their freedom to worship God, to rebuild their communities, and to raise their children in the traditions and beliefs of the Jewish religion.

As a people who have always cherished the values of faith and freedom, all Americans can draw inspiration from the story of Passover. It reminds us of our ongoing journey to build our own Promised Land, where all people are free to worship according to their conscience and where our children can grow up safe from the shadows of intolerance and oppression.

As families across the nation and around the world gather to remember the liberation of the Israelites and to teach a new generation the ancient tradition of the Passover Seder and the reading of the Haggadah, let us all give thanks for God's sustaining love and for the Jewish heritage that has so strengthened and enriched our national life.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a joyous Passover celebration.

Bill Clinton

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Chemical and Biological Weapons Defense

March 30, 1999

Dear _____:

Attached is a report to the Congress on Chemical and Biological Weapons Defense, submitted pursuant to Condition 11(F) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the United States Senate on April 24, 1997.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, and Carl

Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; and Floyd Spence, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus

March 30, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period December 1, 1998, to January 31, 1999.

In an important step toward easing tensions on Cyprus, the Government of Cyprus announced on December 29 that the S-300 anti-aircraft missiles that it had ordered from Russia would not be delivered to the island. This positive and welcome decision gave important new impetus to efforts to reduce tensions and promote a just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus dispute.

The United Nations remained active during the reporting period in the effort to resolve the Cyprus dispute. In addition to renewing the mandate for the U.N. Forces in Cyprus (UNFICYP), the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1218 that endorsed the Secretary General's September 30 initiative to reduce tensions and promote a just and lasting peace on Cyprus. In a December 23 statement, I wholeheartedly endorsed Resolution 1218 and directed that the United States take all necessary steps to support a sustained effort to implement it. As I said then and wish to emphasize now, the United States remains deeply committed to finding a viable solution to the Cyprus problem.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives,